

Securities of a Christian I John 5:13-21

Introduction

We have been studying this great letter by John the apostle about Christian living. With John, it is all black and white. You either are a believer or an unbeliever. John also writes to the Christians in church with a concern for them because false teachers have come in and almost destroyed the church through their teachings and leaving the ministry. He understood that they were confused, so he wrote them a letter to encourage them in the faith and to strengthen their faith. He wanted to assure them of their salvation, not only for the future, but also for today—living a life more abundant and free.

1 John 5:13-21 (NIV) *I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. (14) This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. (15) And if we know that He hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of Him. (16) If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, he should pray and God will give him life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that he should pray about that. (17) All wrongdoing is sin, and there is sin that does not lead to death. (18) We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him. (19) We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. (20) We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know Him who is true. And we are in Him who is true—even in His Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. (21) Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.*

John started his purpose in 5:13, “These things I have written to you.” John reminded the church that everything he had written in the previous 4.5 chapters had one purpose. He revealed his purpose, “to you who believe in the name of the Son of God,” the believers, those who have already believed, “so that you may know that you have eternal life.” He had written the letter so that they can be assured of their salvation. He gave them three tests throughout the letter: doctrinal, social, and moral. Doctrinal tests—who do you believe—Jesus is the Christ come in the flesh and died on the cross and rose again on the third day. Social test—or the love test—do you love God? If so, do you love His children? Moral tests—do you keep (obey) His commandments? Is your life a life of confession when you sin?

John then summarizes everything he had written before with the idea that we have assurance or security in Him. He says we know or can know 7 times in this passage alone. What security do we have in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior!

I. Security of Answered Prayers (14-17)

- This is the confidence
 - Freedom of speech (boldness in approaching God)

Hebrews 4:16 *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

Note: Although we know we have eternal life (which is reality in the future on our perspective), John (and the writer of Hebrews) says that we have confidence now to approach the Lord—especially now in the world of needs, struggles, temptations, concerns, battles. We can freely request what we want

- Before Him

Note: In His direction—in His presence.

- Ask according to His will

Note: Although we have the freedom to ask what we want, there is a condition: according to His will.

1 John 3:22-23 *And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. (23) And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.*

John 15:7, 16 *If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. (16) ...that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.*

James 4:3 *You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.*

Note: How do we know it is His will? Scripture gives us several conditions: 1) believing in His Son, 2) keep His commandments, 3) love the brothers and sisters-in-Christ, 4) abide in Christ, 5) His words abiding in you. These

are spiritual conditions that we must be in before we can pray according to His will. When we keep His commandments and love our families-in-Christ, then we are in His will. We want to do what He wants and not what we want—as part of our own selfish motives (as James says).

- He hears us and answers us

Psalms 37:4 *Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.*

Note: What should we want? We should want that the Father be glorified, the Son be honored, and our spiritual benefit. Then He will hear and answer us.

Note: In the following verses (15-17) John takes what it seems like a strange turn into another thought, but it is consistent with what he is saying all along. When we see our fellow Christians sinning, then we pray for them that God will discipline them and save their life. He reminds

Transition: There is one prayer that God will not answer...when He has made up His mind about the future of such person—death. Then what we pray for will not change His mind.

- Sin that leads to death—what does this mean?

Note: There are two main views with this statement. Either view is correct in Scripture and we are not sure what John means here, so we will assume that John has in mind both views. This is not a point for us to build our theology on, but to see what Scripture says. This is not John's main point—his point was that we can have confidence before God in Him answering our prayers.

- Sin to death—a person who rejects Christ

1 John 2:19 *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.*

Hebrews 10:29 *Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?*

Note: John does not say not to pray for such person who has rejected Christ because we cannot know who will reject Him totally. What he is saying (in both cases) that don't be surprised if God does not answer your prayers for such person because He has judged such person.

- Christians who sin unto death

1 Corinthians 11:29-30 *For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. (30) For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. (See also Acts 5:1-11)*

Note: God did this to protect His church from further harm. Note that John does not specify which sin leads to death because there is no such rule. John says that all wrongdoing is sin. It is when God has had enough of a Christian sinning and takes that person home with Him. Again our prayer will not change that outcome.

II. Security of Holiness (18-19)

- Born of God does not sin
 - To not practice sin; there is no pattern of sin in life (See **Romans 6:17-22**)

Note: Paul says that we were once slaves to sin—we did everything our master says (sin). But now we are slaves to righteousness. We strive to do everything our Lord says and reveals to us in Scripture.

Note: John is not talking about Christians never sinning or perfection (because he says earlier in 1:9 that if we do sin, then we must confess). He is talking about pattern in our life that is sinful. Is it an attitude or pattern (or practice) that is contrary what God says?

- Christ keeps us

Examples: Peter and Job

2 Timothy 4:18 *And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen! (See 1 John 3:8; John 17:6; Jude 24)*

Note: Jesus totally destroyed all the works of the devil in our lives that the devil cannot lay claim on us again. The devil cannot take ownership in our lives. God restricts the devil's access in our lives (if we are not able, God will not allow temptation to overtake us, but sometimes He will allow the devil access to us so that our faith will be stronger).

- World of Satan

Note: Every evil thoughts, systems—politics, economics, religion, entertainment—are all under the devil's control.

- We belong to God

1 Peter 2:9 *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*

III. Security of Jesus Christ the True God (20-21)

- *And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.*

1 John 1:1-4 *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life-- (2) the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us-- (3) that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. (4) And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.*

Note: This is the foundation of everything we have come so far in the letter of 1 John: the understanding that Jesus Christ is the True God. If we have this understanding wrong, then we have everything wrong. We will not have eternal life. It starts with the Person of Jesus Christ our Lord and our God. It is in Him alone that we have salvation. It is Him alone that we have access to God. It is Him alone that our sins are forgiven. It is Him alone that His righteousness is imputed to us. It is Him alone that promises of God are fulfilled.

- Keep yourselves from idols

Note: John says here do not allow the world distract you—and everything in this world can be an idol: people, places, things, or ideas.